

BOROUGH OF TOTNES

THE

ANNUAL REPORTS

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND

BOROUGH SURVEYOR

AND

SANITARY INSPECTOR.

FOR THE YEAR 1937.

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

BOROUGH OF TOTNES

FOR THE YEAR 1937.

Mr. Mayor and Members of the Council:

The health of the Borough during the past year has been good apart from an epidemic of Scarlet Fever. A large number of cases of this illness occurred but the great majority of them were of an exceedingly mild type, so mild that in many of them it was only when desquamation supervened that the diagnosis was confirmed. A point which I would like to stress is one which cropped up during this epidemic, namely the advisability of keeping very mild cases at home if the conditions permit and not filling the Isolation Hospitals to the exclusion of cases such as Diphtheria. Scarlet Fever was so prevalent in the surrounding towns and villages that in some instances there was no room in the Isolation Hospitals for serious cases of Diphtheria. No definite source of infection could be traced but most of the cases were children attending the Junior School. It is disappointing that the free inoculation against Diphtheria is not being taken advantage of by the parents of children of susceptible age.

Area of the Borough: 1,422 acres.

Population: 4,627.

Number of Inhabited Houses: 1,605.

Rateable Value: £33,383.

Penny Rate amounts to £133.

				M.	F.
Live Births: Total	...	...	...	33	34
	Legitimate	...	...	32	31
	Illegitimate	...	...	1	3
Still Births: Total	...	...	...	1	2
	Legitimate	...	...	1	1
	Illegitimate	...	...	—	1
Deaths	...	...	Total 59	30	29

Birth Rate: 14.4.

Death Rate: 12.7.

Deaths of Infants under One Year of Age:

				M.	F.
Total	...	...	...	3	— legitimate.
Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	...	44
Deaths from Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	...	0
Other Puerperal Causes	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Measles, Whooping Cough & Diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	0

MILK.

In connection with the Epidemic of Scarlet Fever from which the Borough suffered I should like to draw attention to the opinion of leading medical authorities and of our County Medical Officer that all milk supplied to Schools should be pasteurized. In your Medical Officer's opinion there is no other way of treating the milk problem. It has been shown that the loss sustained by pasteurization is negligible. The flavour of milk treated in this way is not as pleasant as that of raw milk, but as one knows that pasteurized milk is free from Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Typhoid and Undulant Fever and from Tuberculosis, this slight alteration in the taste is a small thing. There is no other way of rendering milk safe is the conclusion which has been arrived

at by those best qualified to know. And this takes into consideration the complicated, unreliable and expensive so-called production of T.T. milk.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The arrangement with Newton Abbot Isolation Hospital continued, but owing to the prevalence of Scarlet Fever all the cases could not be admitted there and some had to be sent to other Isolation Hospitals.

FACTORIES.

Nothing was found to report to you on paying the usual visits to the Factories within the Borough.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.				
Disease.		Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Small Pox	...	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	...	52	18	—
Diphtheria	...	—	—	—
Enteric	...	—	—	—
Puerperal Fever	...	—	—	—
Pneumonia	...	—	—	2

TUBERCULOSIS.

Age Periods,	NEW CASES—5.				DEATHS - 6.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0								
1								
5								
10								
15								
20								
25								
35	1	1			2		1	
45								
55	2	1				1		
65 & over					2			
Totals ...	3	2			4	1	1	

HOUSING.

The first Slum Clearance Scheme has been carried out.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year :—

- | | |
|--|----|
| (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) | 42 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | 42 |
| (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 | 15 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | 15 |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation | 42 |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation | — |

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices :—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers ...	37
---	----

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year :—**(a) Proceedings under Sections 17, 18 and 23 of the Housing Act, 1930 :**

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs | 5 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :— | |
| (a) By Owners | 5 |
| (b) By Local Authority in default of Owners | — |

(b).—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 42

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—

(a) By Owners 37

(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners —

(c) Proceedings under Sections 19 and 21 of the Housing Act, 1930 :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... 1

(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders 1

(d) Proceedings under Section 20 of the Housing Act, 1930 :

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made —

(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit —

Properties in Preliminary Survey of Overcrowding Act 626

Do. Measured under Act 670

IAN JEFFERISS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health
for the Borough of Totnes.

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
Borough Engineer, Surveyor,
and Sanitary Inspector.
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER, 1937.

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my Ninth Annual Report :

HOUSE REFUSE.

During the past year a new ten cubic yard capacity Refuse Lorry was purchased and is giving good service.

A semi-weekly collection is now in progress and a considerable saving in overtime is noticed. Of course, Hotels and Restaurants have a more frequent collection, especially during the summer season.

Most of the properties have now a sanitary dust-bin and those who have not will shortly be dealt with.

WATER SUPPLY.

Again there was no shortage of water during the year. During the summer months the Higher Bowden and Stony-stiles Supplies were turned into Lower Bowden Reservoir and replaced by the new scheme, which gave increased pressure and an excellent supply to the higher portions of Bridgetown. In the winter, when springs returned to normal the system was reversed.

Fifteen million gallons of water were pumped from the Jubilee scheme and purified before consumption. A very excellent report was received from the County Analyst on this supply.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

Various tests have been made with regard to sewers, etc., at the Outfall Works. Pumping tests were held for one month and I am at present going into the matter of chemical precipitation, hoping to clarify the sewage before filtration.

Two storm overflows have been erected on sewers surcharged with storm water, and these are working satisfactorily.

BUILDINGS.

Plans have been approved as follows:—

Alterations, Additions, etc.	...	34
New Houses		47

HOUSING.

During the past year over 700 houses have been measured and all particulars taken as regards overcrowding. Nine cases of overcrowding were discovered as against eleven cases in the Preliminary Survey.

The last of the 58 houses at Smithfields were completed in the early part of the year.

SLUM CLEARANCE.

Work of demolition under this Act has been commenced in all but one case, and several of the properties have been raised to the ground.

PLEASURE GROUNDS.

The new entrance to the Island was completed in May and a great improvement is noted.

Arrangements were made with the Devon County Council to take over the site of the cottages in Coronation Road and a lay-out approved for a shrubbery, with seating accommodation,

The paths in the Park are now in need of re-surfacing, and the buildings require re-painting. The takings as compared with last year are as follows:—

		1937.			1936.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Hard Courts	...	22	2	0	21	9	4
Grass Courts	...	3	3	0	2	11	4
Bowls	...	21	18	4	20	7	10
Clock Golf	...	0	4	10	0	6	10
Chairs	...	0	6	2	0	7	4
		£47	14	4	£45	2	8

PUBLIC CONVENIENCE.

Plans for a new Convenience and Bus Shelter have been approved and a Contract accepted. The Convenience is situated at the Plains end of Coronation Road and should be opened by the coming Whit-week.

FOOD INSPECTION.

The four registered and one licensed Slaughterhouse have been periodically inspected and always found in a clean state. All condemned food has been voluntarily surrendered and is listed as follows:—

Carcases (various)	...	...	24
Hams	...	...	1
Fowls	...	...	1

In addition to these there have been many hundredweight of offal and portions of carcasses.

HOUSING INSPECTIONS.

Details of these may be found in the Report of the Medical Officer of Health.

MILK.

Each week samples have been taken from suppliers and producers for cleanliness and one each month for tuberculosis,

HIGHWAYS.

The mileage of the classified and unclassified Roads has been increased by a quarter of a mile owing to the completion of the Northern By-Pass Road, which was thrown open to traffic and named "Coronation Road" in May last.

One scheme of Private Street Works was carried out in the road connecting Ashburton Road with Weirfields Road and a footpath provided in front of Redworth and Radnor Terraces.

Widening schemes are now in progress on the Higher Plymouth Road.

At the moment of writing no definite information is available regarding the position of the Westerly Extension to the By-Pass.

STREET LIGHTING.

The number of street lamps is now 174, but two of these are illuminated by electricity, one of these having a Sodium vapour lamp. Ten new lamps have been erected during the year.

MARKETS.

During the past year plans have been approved and a Contract accepted for extensive alterations to the Cattle Market. These include a dial weighbridge and the covering of the fat stock and cow and calf sale rings.

The receipts from the Market Weighbridge were £27 19s. 6d., as compared with £27 11s. 6d. in 1936.

CONCLUSION.

I desire to thank the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors for their support during the past year, also my colleagues for their kindly co-operation, the outdoor staff, my pupils, and last, but not least, my clerks, Mr. Parr and Miss Bennett, for their loyalty and attention.

I am,

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

JOSEPH W. SMITH,

M.Inst.M. & Cy.E., M.R.San.I., F.I.S.E.

Borough Engineer, Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

